

A black and white photograph of a young woman with her hair tied back, smiling warmly as she looks down at a stack of books she is holding. The image is framed by a vibrant, multi-colored border that transitions from orange at the top to green at the bottom.

Empowering Change, Enriching Community

Annual Report
2022-2023

WILTON LIBRARY





A Message from the President & Executive Director

Each year Wilton Library strives to accomplish its mission of serving as the cultural and intellectual center of Wilton. During this past year, and with the support of friends, volunteers, trustees, and staff, we informed, enriched, connected, and inspired our community with our dynamic and diverse programs and services.

The return of our Summer Show Art Exhibition featuring Wilton artists, the return of our Hot & Cool Jazz concerts and our Summer Music Concert Series, and our first-ever Wilton Pride Festival brought energy and excitement while making meaningful connections for our friends and neighbors. We also launched a new state-of-the-art website, showcasing our commitment to innovation and leading-edge technology, while highlighting the extraordinary resources and experiences that Wilton Library has to offer.

Together, we took the opportunity to look inward, reflect, and recommit to our mission, and to imagine the future. With input from members of our community, donors, and volunteers, our entire staff and Board completed a Strategic Planning process. Beginning with a forward-looking philosophy, we created a 3-year plan to better meet the evolving needs of our core constituents through enhanced programming at every stage of life, and to promote lifelong learning. The plan also addresses activating The Brubeck Collection as a platform for arts and education both for Wilton residents, and to scholars from around the world.

Most importantly, we crafted a new vision statement centered on fulfilling the diverse needs of our changing community, and providing "opportunities to explore, learn, and create in an environment where everyone is made to feel safe and welcome."

As always, the success of the library's initiatives involves the continued collaboration and commitment of expert staff, board, volunteers, patrons, community partners, and our generous donors who are so integral to our library. We look forward to seeing you at our events and programs in the coming year and are thankful for your loyal support.



Carol Johnson
Board President

Carol Johnson



Caroline Mandler
Executive Director

Caroline Mandler

Wilton Library Empowering Change, Enriching Community



“A year of both growth and renewed purpose,” were the words that Wilton Library’s Executive Director Caroline Mandler chose to encapsulate the past fiscal year at the 128th Annual Meeting for Friends held in June. Indeed, it was a busy and productive year for the library.

With an eye toward imagining Wilton Library’s future, our staff and Board of Trustees worked together to develop and launch a forward-looking and focused Strategic Plan with input from patrons, donors, and town residents. The Plan is a detailed road map for the next three years, highlighting our core purpose, mission, and vision, with emphasis on progress, openness to change, and working to successfully meet the diverse needs of our evolving Wilton community.

Wilton Library has grown and changed immensely since it was founded in the corner of a post office in 1895. We exist to serve our community and we aim to enrich the lives of Wilton’s residents in significant and meaningful ways. This year, a patron described Wilton Library as “...a haven of tranquility, a sanctuary for the mind and spirit. It is a place where one can lose themselves in the abundance of reading materials, surrounded by the gentle whispers of knowledge and imagination...a true hub for learning and creativity.” It is always gratifying to hear about how much our patrons appreciate the library. Our vision is to provide opportunities to explore, learn, and create in an environment where everyone is made to feel safe and welcome. And we will always work diligently to stay true to our purpose and mission: to inform, enrich, connect, and inspire our community.

Friends of Wilton Library Association

Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

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“My favorite destination on my frequent walks. I am delighted to give as generously as I can every year to an institution that serves the community so very well.”

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“I value the Wilton Library... it’s a part of the core, the cultural, and intellectual hub of our town.”

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 Wilton Garden Club
 Wilton Re Group

“The library is wonderful, but it is the people who make it so special.”

Wilton Smiles
 Antonia E. Wiseman
 Hollis E. Wright-Warren

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 Carolyn & Peers Brewer
 Brookdale Place of Wilton
 Cannondale Animal Clinic

“Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciated your courteous, competent, and enjoyable training session in the Innovation Station.”

Strategic Plan for 2023-2026



In February, Wilton Library launched its Strategic Plan for 2023-2026. The planning process took six months and involved feedback from focus groups and confidential interviews with Wilton residents, business owners, and town leaders. The library’s staff and Board collaborated to create four key goals that will guide the library’s work over the next three years. We also reexamined and reaffirmed our mission statement, and created a vision statement. We have created detailed plans to carry out these four goals, and we are excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. We look forward to collaborating with the Wilton community in thoughtful and innovative ways as we put the plans into action.

Mission, Vision & Goals

MISSION

We are the cultural and intellectual center of Wilton. We inform, enrich, connect, and inspire our community.

VISION

Wilton Library will fulfill the diverse needs of our changing community by providing informative programs, comprehensive resources, innovative technology, stellar services, and access to our unique assets, with plentiful opportunities to explore, learn, and create in an environment where *everyone* is made to feel safe and welcome. We will hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards and measure our success by the levels of participation and satisfaction in library programs and services.

<p>Wilton’s Center</p> <p>Position the Library at the center of Wilton at a time of growth and change.</p>	<p>Core Constituents</p> <p>Meet the evolving needs of Wilton residents at every life stage.</p>	<p>The Brubeck Collection</p> <p>Activate The Brubeck Collection as a marquee asset and point of pride for Wilton.</p>	<p>Our Capabilities</p> <p>Ensure the Library’s strong future and its capacity to serve successive generations effectively.</p>
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Enriching Our Community Experiences and Resources

This year Wilton Library continued to serve as an important community hub at the center of town, enriching the lives of Wilton's residents with exciting and informative programs, comprehensive resources, innovative technology, and stellar services.

In August, we were pleased to launch our new dramatically redesigned website with a modern and streamlined look, feel, and functionality to meet the growing digital needs of our patrons. We also re-opened our Innovation Station, a community Makerspace filled with state-of-the-art equipment, and teens and adults signed up for one-on-one sessions to create projects and learn new skills.

We continued to expand our Digital Library resources, adding free access to Mango Languages and Signing Savvy, while boosting our digital collection. And our study rooms and rental rooms were constantly busy with meetings and work and study sessions.

Throughout the year the library offered an engaging mix of in-person and virtual programming, bringing new knowledge and experiences to patrons of all ages. The long list of enrichment programs included several author talks, seminars on literature, history, art, and music, book discussions, and much more. For the sixteenth year, we teamed up with the Wilton Historical Society for our scholarly lecture series "A Rocky Road: The Struggle for Rights in America."



Another highlight was our community-wide reading program, *Wilton Reads 2023*, which explored climate change and the meaning of community with the book *Vigil Harbor* by Julia Glass and included a visit from the award-winning author.



We were also delighted to greet friends and families at Wilton's big community social events - the Street Fair & Sidewalk Sale in July, Cannon Grange's Agricultural Fair, the Holiday Stroll and Winter Carnival, the Memorial Day Parade, and the Wilton Farmers' Market. In June, we saw many new and familiar faces at our third Ice Cream Social, complete with superheroes and live music. And we were very proud to host activities for the first annual Wilton Pride Festival, where we saw an amazing turnout that was uplifted by the heartfelt support of our community. We also held four successful book sales and a "free books day," all made possible by our hardworking and dedicated team of book sale volunteers.



Chapey Family
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“Congratulations on a lovely new website!”

Matthew Greene Educational Consulting
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 Nancy & Bill Brautigam
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 Benson Briggs
 Brookfield Craft Center
 JoAnn & Henry Bullinger
 Karen Birck & Paul Burnham
 Iris Busch



From a resident who moved out of Wilton: “My grandkids want to come here because it’s warm and it feels like home.”

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 The Caty Family
 Erika S. Chamberlain
 John & Susan Christian
 Copia Home and Garden
 Dana Creanga
 Darst Family
 Thomas & Jerre Dawson
 Anna Jo & Richard Dubow
 Escalante Family



“I feel so fortunate to be able to participate in your program with Mark Schenker. He is brilliant... Thank you for your efforts to add such important enrichment to our lives.”

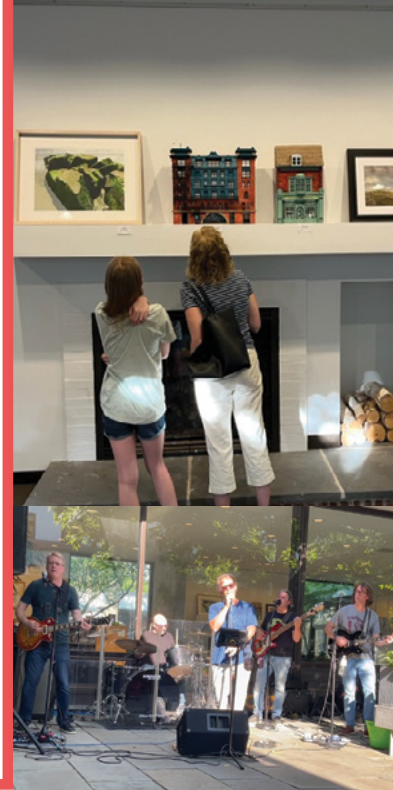


Enriching Our Community Art and Music

This year Wilton Library continued its robust tradition of music and arts programming, enriching and inspiring our community with the diverse talents of well-known musicians and local artists. Rotating art exhibitions graced the walls of the library every month, including the Fine and Performing Arts Department of Wilton Public Schools (FAPA) Student Library Show in May, featuring artwork and live musical performances by students in grades K through 12. Two more art exhibitions with meaningful ties to our community returned to the library: FOCUS '23, the Wilton Arts Council annual photography exhibit for all ages; and our 76th annual Summer Show Art Exhibition, celebrating local artists who live and work in Wilton.

In music, our extremely popular Hot & Cool Jazz series brought world-class jazz concerts to the Brubeck Room stage. The Jerry Bergonzi Quartet and Chris Brubeck's Triple Play were some of the jazz luminaries who performed before packed audiences. Classical music concerts included a baroque music performance by Ensemble Chaconne and our Connecticut's Own chamber music series. We were also happy to welcome back our lively Summer Music Concert Series on Thursday evenings in July. Audience members of all ages had a great time singing, dancing, and enjoying popular tunes in the Brubeck Room and Courtyard.

The Brubeck Collection housed at Wilton Library, one of the largest and most prestigious jazz archives in the world, continued to draw the interest of researchers and other visitors seeking to experience and appreciate Dave Brubeck's genius and legacy. We are working to expand online access to the collection, and we plan to activate it as a platform for arts and education to attract even more jazz scholars and enthusiasts from around the globe.



This list continues from page 11

Calla Fankhanel
Charlie & Ruth-Ann Flynn
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Four Seasons Racquet Club
Sylvia & Steven Freije
Lorraine Gelard
Glengate Company
The Goddard School
Linda & David Gortz
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Hotel Zero Degrees Norwalk
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**“The staff at
Wilton Library
receives an A+.”**

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Drs. Michael Sarezky & Virginia Smith
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Joan & Don Savage
John Scalia

**“One of
our best
community
resources -
love Wilton
Library!”**

**“You create
magnificent
art exhibits.
Wonderful art
placement...
Thank you
for your
expertise and
organization.
The Wilton
Library team
is the best.”**

Robyn Scatena
Philip Schenck
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Craig Serin
Jen Shelley
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Jerry & Beth Sprole
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 (to \$249)**

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 Jacqueline Algon

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 Herbert Appleman
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“Amazing events - my son will be 2 in September but he has always been welcome to join the great events and programming. THANK YOU!”

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 Douglas & Kathleen Coombs
 Bethany Cooper
 Teresa Coperine
 Sarah Coppola
 Jacqueline & Andrew Cox
 Marilyn Crandall
 Crawford Family
 Courtney & Mike Cronin
 Sara Curtis
 Karen Daignault

“It is such a lovely library, I’d be sitting by the current periodicals and that fireplace many days if we lived in Wilton.”

Susan Dailey
 John & Mary Lee Danaher
 Amy Davenport
 Kari Davis
 Doug Davison
 Lauren Day
 John De Francesco
 Lani DeBoer
 Cathy & Don DeCesare
 Matthew Dellapina
 Meghan & Steve DeMasi
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 Dr. Brian D. Fengel
 Barbara Fidanza
 Douglas & Deborah Fine
 Joe & Ann Fiteni
 Nancy Flaherty
 Andy & Hillary Flick



“Love everything happening there and thanks so much for all you do.”

Thomas F. Flynn
 Lindsay Fontana
 Veronica & Gary Foster
 Lawrence & Marilyn Fox
 Russell & Irene Friedman
 Ken Fuchsman
 Emily & Michael Galligan
 Eric & Nancy Gany
 John & Julia Gardiner
 Brooks & Adair Garis
 Bob & Jocelyn Gebhardt
 Tina & Steven Georgeou
 Amy & Samuel Gettler
 Patricia Giacalone
 Kim & Eric Giler
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 Elaine Gordon
 Anne Goslee-Jovovic
 Gloria Gottschalk & Richard Frostig
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 Victoria Green
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 Rebecca Hendrickson
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 Jessica Hernandez
 Myra Hess
 Marianne Hickey
 Anita & Hiro Hiranandani
 Caroline Hoffman
 Lois Hoffman

Sam & Kate Holbrooks
 Jody Holmes
 Home Decor and More
 Kris Honeycutt
 Gwen & James Hong
 Frederic N. Horner & Lois

“It has a lot of great books and if you have any questions, there’s always someone to ask. And I love the special programs. I like the touch tank from the Maritime Aquarium. I LOVE THE LIBRARY!” - Child patron

Guberman
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 Marilyn Hughes
 David & Berta Hull
 Katherine Hutter
 Virginia Hyde
 Oleksandr Ierenkov & Merziye Vadzhytova
 Felicia Ingram
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 Carol & Gene Kopfmann
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 Kumon of Wilton

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 Jennifer G. Maric
 Maritime Aquarium
 Jodi Markoff
 Diane Martucci
 Beth & Chip Mason
 Elizabeth T. Massey
 Susan & Bill Mathews

Enriching Our Community Children and Teens

With inviting spaces dedicated to encouraging a lifelong love of reading, learning, and discovery, the Children’s Library and Teen Services department continued the tradition of informing and enriching the lives of the younger members of our community. Children participated in a wide variety of programs and activities, including our popular summer reading program, STEAM workshops, music for kids with the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra, arts and crafts, and storytimes with visits by Wilton firefighters and police officers. A special outdoor reading series “Books and a Blanket,” a collaboration with Wilton Land Conservation Trust and Wilton Go Green, had another successful season. Another highlight: the much-anticipated return of our beloved Wizard Camp program, featuring live animals, a “Quidditch” tournament, and yummy butterbeer.

Tweens and teens attended STEAM activities including rocketry and coding, cooking and crafting sessions, college planning workshops, and much more. Our Teen Library Council, a group for Wilton teens interested in becoming more involved with the library, participated in engaging activities and discussions every month. And Wilton Library’s Teen Robotics team, Singularity Technology, wrapped up another successful season. The team competed in the Connecticut FIRST Tech Challenge State Championship in February and won the prestigious Finalist Alliance Captain title, with their alliance finishing in 2nd place overall. They are looking forward to next year’s challenge.



Enriching Through Partnerships

Wilton Library teamed up with our valued community partners to enrich the lives of our patrons, opening doors to new skills, experiences, and knowledge - such as learning about beekeeping, how to research ancestors, exploring the words of Shakespeare, sharing poetry in a meadow, and much more. Thank you to our partners who made our performances, seminars, programs, and workshops possible.



Partnerships

AARP	Domestic Violence Crisis Center	Norwalk Symphony Orchestra	Silver Hill Hospital	Wilton Candlelight Concerts	Wilton Historical Society
Amadeo Family	Elm Street Books	Positive Directions – The Center for Prevention & Counseling	Southwest CT Agency on Aging	Wilton Chamber of Commerce	Wilton Housing Committee
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention	Fairfield County Bank	Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra	SPED*NET Wilton	Wilton Continuing Education	Wilton Land Conservation Trust
American Red Cross	Girl Scout Troop #50798	Riverbrook Regional YMCA	Stamford Health	Wilton Domestic Violence Task Force	Wilton League of Women Voters
Ancona's Wine & Liquors	GOOD Morning Wilton	ROAR	Trackside Teen Center	Wilton Fire Department	Wilton Police Department
The Brubeck Family	The Hub	Rotary Club of Wilton	Triangle Community Center	Wilton Garden Club	Wilton Pride
Cohen and Wolf	Kids in Crisis	The Rowan Center	Turnbridge Treatment Center	Wilton Go Green	Wilton Public Schools
CT Poetry Society	Kiwanis Club of Wilton	SCORE Fairfield County	Turning Point CT	Wilton High School GSA	Wilton Senior Center
Darien Library	Middlebrook GSA	Shakespeare on the Sound	Village Market	Wilton High School PTSA	Wilton Town Hall
Daughters of the American Revolution	Middlebrook PTA				Wilton Youth Council
					Wilton Youth Services



By the Numbers

Expenses

Revenue

Town Grant



\$2,894,761

Annual Appeal



\$334,646

Fundraising Events and Other Donations*



\$489,163

Operating Income (Including Investment Income)



\$220,605

Total Revenue: \$3,939,175

Salaries & Benefits



\$2,609,234

Library Content & Programs



\$498,717

Building Maintenance & Utilities



\$274,855

Technology



\$279,501

Library Operations



\$95,042

Fundraising & Development



\$111,662

Total Expenses: \$3,869,011

*Excludes Endowment Donations
Our collection, programs, and services would not be possible without the generous support of our donors.

This list continues from page 17

Laurence Mauer & Roberta Kahan
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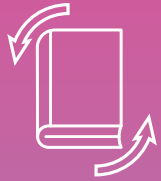
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“...thanking you and your staff for an amazing Wizard Camp... you guys really went above and beyond.”

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RPM Raceway

Facts & Figures



Total Items Circulated
227,822



Total Number of Programs
716



Total Program Attendance
23,163



Attendance at 86 Innovation Station Sessions
391



Library Visits
187,080



Number of Times People Logged in to Library Computers
54,080



Questions Answered by Reference Librarians
62,986



Museum Passes Borrowed
183



Meeting and Study Room Uses
3,095



Total Number of Items Available in the Collection
647,385



Digital Library Loans
58,481



Number of Website Visits
215,069

This list continues from page 21

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Great Decisions series: "In a word—EXCELLENT...It provides a base to explore critical issues in an intellectual sharing environment. It challenges the most important activity of the human mind—to think. And to think well demands hearing and understanding other perspectives and contrarian points of view."



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Securing Our Future in the Community

The Wilton Library Endowment Fund links our organization to the future. Established for the long-term preservation of WLA and its mission, the Endowment Fund provides an enduring source of support, contributing to the library's present and its future. The Cornerstone Society recognizes donors who have made a minimum contribution of \$10,000 to the Fund.

Thanks to our donors, we have established and grown an Endowment Fund for Wilton Library, safeguarding the crucial role the library plays in the fabric of our community, today and in perpetuity.



The Cornerstone Society

\$100,000+ Cornerstone Society Pinnacle

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George & Jennifer Davatzes/
Davatzes Family Foundation
Nick & Dorie Davatzes/
Davatzes Family Foundation
Paul & Carol Evanson Family
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The Daniel E. Offutt, III Private
Foundation Trust
Louise & Erv Shames

\$75,000-\$99,999 Cornerstone Society Platinum

Betsy & Jerry Goodwin

\$50,000-\$74,999 Cornerstone Society Gold

The Foster Family Fund
In Memory of Phillip A. Tai Lauria
Dr. Mark & Linda Rubinstein
The Stroup Family

\$25,000-\$49,999 Cornerstone Society Silver

A+E Networks/In Memory of
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Mike Boswood & Mary Pytko
In Memory of Nick Davatzes
Greg & Gina Jansen
Stacy & John Reynolds

\$10,000-\$24,999 Cornerstone Society Bronze

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Celebrating With Our Community

Casino Night and Spring Gala Fundraisers



Fundraising is truly essential to the successful operation and growth of Wilton Library. We are not a fully tax-supported municipal library. We rely on donations from the public to fund all of the collection materials, programs, and services we offer.

This year, Wilton Library's in-person fundraising events returned with a splash as we hosted our first-ever Casino Night in October, bringing all of the lights, sounds, and excitement of a Vegas-style party to the library - complete with Elvis! This was such a popular event, we decided to bring it back for the upcoming fiscal year.

In April the Spring Gala, our biggest fundraising event of the year, was an enormous success. Celebrating both the library and spring with the theme "Imagination in Bloom," guests enjoyed a fun and memorable evening of dinner and dancing to live music, as well as bidding for auction items. A special paddle raise to support the Children's Library and Teen Services was also one of the evening's highlights. The event honored Judy Higby, Kathy Leeds, Katharine Welling, and Malcolm Whyte for their many years of dedication and service to the library.

Our community truly shines at these fundraisers, as we unite and come together for a great cause. We sincerely thank all of the attendees, donors, sponsors, and advertisers who helped to make these special events possible, as well as our creative and committed volunteers and staff who worked so hard behind the scenes to ensure their success.



In Memoriam Lesley Keogh

Lesley Keogh, a much-loved member of our Children's Library staff, passed away in March. From baby storytimes, to visiting the schools as the Unsinkable Molly Brown, to fortune telling as Professor Trelawney at Wizard Camp, to making the most amazing scarecrows, to suggesting just the right book, she did everything.

In the words of our patrons, Lesley was "a treasure and a gem," "a caring and wonderful librarian," and her "warm smile, kindness and the joy she shared with us during every visit will remain as happy memories." She was a member of Wilton Library's staff for more than 20 years, and we won't be the same without her.



Tributes

IN HONOR OF...

The Bell Family
Judy Grimm
Julie Hughes
Amy Lilien-Harper
Inge Maerowitz
Sue Stengrim
Sue Sullivan
Elaine Tai-Lauria
Kathy Welling
Julie Wolf

IN MEMORY OF...

Joyce Ackermann
Sharrie Alechman
Heidi Brenner
James T. Brown, Jr.
Cornelia 'Kennie' Buono
Mary Carpenter & Timothy Egan Lenahan
Thomas Crompton
Pat & John Curran
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Catherine Romer
Robert Russell, Jr.
Edith Sutter
Mrs. Scotty Taylor
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This list continues from page 23

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Carl Tucker
Kelly Ullman
Dee Unterbach
Luisa Uriarte
Vanessa Vagner
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Zachary Verrilli
Wendy C. Vickrey
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Jimena A. Vignola
Jere Vockins & Bruce Taylor
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Jennifer Walker

"I like the reading program because I like to challenge myself to see how long I can read for."
- Child patron

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Dava Waltzman
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Martha & Gerald Weiss
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Nancy Wiese

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GOOD Morning Wilton

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 Cooks Nook
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 Dancing on Grapes

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 Lindsay Fontana
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 Four Seasons Racquet Club
 Golf Quest
 Good Morning Nail Salon

"It's a real tribute to you all there that Wilton Library is so beloved and growing..."

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 Ridgefield Playhouse
 Ring's End
 Rise Doughnuts

River Road Gallery
 Rolling Hills Country Club
 RPM Raceway
 Albert Ruggiero
 RX Fitness Coaching
 Saltbox Press
 Mark J. Schiff
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 Sipstirs
 Rodger & Lori Smith
 Southern Yankee
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 Stewart Flowers & Gifts
 Stop & Shop
 Studio Golf
 Patty & Rick Tomasetti
 Town of Wilton Parks & Recreation

"Thank you to everyone at the library who makes it such a special place to visit every day in Wilton!"

Village Market, Inc.
 Westport Country Playhouse
 Wild Roses & Blooms
 Wilton Children's Theater
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 Wilton Historical Society
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Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

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